Safely Preparing Your Old Phone for Trade-In

A comprehensive guide to protecting your privacy and maximising value when trading in your mobile device

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Why Prepare Your Phone Properly?

Your Digital Life at Risk

Your mobile phone contains a treasure trove of sensitive personal information: cherished photos, vital contacts, private messages, and crucial banking details.

Improper preparation doesn't just risk data theft—it can lead to serious privacy breaches and identity theft.

Following the proper steps safeguards your identity whilst ensuring you receive the best possible trade-in value for your device.

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Step 1: Back Up Your Data

Cloud Services

Utilise iCloud, Google Drive, or OneDrive to automatically sync your important data to the cloud

Local Transfer

Connect your phone to your computer and manually transfer files for an additional layer of security

Authentication Apps

Take special care transferring multifactor authentication apps to avoid being locked out of critical accounts

Top tip: Create a checklist of all apps and accounts you need to transfer before beginning the backup process. This ensures nothing important is left behind.

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Step 2: Remove SIM and Memory Cards

01

Locate the SIM Tray

Find the small pinhole on the side of your device and use the ejector tool to gently remove the SIM tray

02

Extract Your SIM Card

Carefully remove the SIM card to keep your phone number and carrier information secure

03

Check for SD Cards

If your device has expandable storage, locate and remove any microSD cards containing additional data

04

Store Safely

Keep these cards in a secure location—never include them in your trade-in package

Step 3: Sign Out and Disable Security Features

Sign Out of All Accounts

Log out of iCloud, Google Account, Samsung Account, and all app stores. This prevents the next user from accessing your digital identity and ensures a clean device transfer.

Disable Device Locks

Remove passwords, PINs, pattern locks, fingerprint authentication, and Face ID. This ensures the new owner can set up the device without obstacles.

Turn Off Activation Locks

Disable "Find My iPhone" on iOS devices or "Find My Device" on Android. Failing to do this is the most common reason for trade-in rejection.

Step 4: Factory Reset Your Phone

Complete Data Erasure

A factory reset restores your phone to its original settings, permanently erasing all personal data, apps, and customised settings.

This is the most critical step in protecting your privacy and ensuring your device is ready for its next owner.

Important: Once completed, this action cannot be reversed, so ensure your backup is complete first.

iPhone Instructions

Settings → General → Transfer or Reset → Erase All Content and Settings

Android Instructions

Settings → System → Reset Options → Factory Data Reset

Verify Success

Restart device and confirm no password is required—it should appear as new

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Step 5: Double-Check Your Phone

1

Power On and Inspect

Turn on your device and thoroughly navigate through all sections to verify no personal data remains visible

2

Check Critical Areas

Open contacts, photo gallery, messages, email accounts, and browser history to ensure everything has been erased

3

Verify Unlock Status

Confirm the device is completely unlocked and ready for a new user to set up without any restrictions

4

Remove All Accessories

Take off any cases, screen protectors, decorative skins, or pop sockets before packaging for shipment

Packaging and Shipping Tips

Use Official Packaging

If provided with a prepaid trade-in kit, use it exactly as instructed. These kits are designed specifically for secure device transport.

What Not to Include

Do not pack chargers, cables, earphones, or other accessories unless specifically requested by the trade-in programme.

Secure Packaging

Wrap your device in bubble wrap or protective material, seal the package securely with strong tape, and attach the shipping label clearly.

Shipping advice: Take a photo of your packaged device and the shipping label as proof of condition and dispatch. Track your shipment to monitor its journey.

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What Happens After Trade-In?

Device Inspection

Your phone undergoes thorough assessment for functionality and condition

Secure Data Wiping

Any remaining data is professionally and securely erased using industry-standard methods

Refurbishment

Devices in good condition are refurbished, tested, and prepared for resale

Responsible Recycling

Devices beyond repair are recycled responsibly to reduce e-waste and environmental impact

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Protect Your Data, Protect Your Future

Safeguard Your Privacy

Following these essential steps ensures your personal information remains secure whilst you receive the best possible trade-in value for your device.

Stay Informed and Cautious

Remain vigilant about protecting your personal information throughout the trade-in process and beyond.

Ready for Trade-In Success

Your phone is now prepared for a smooth, secure trade-in experience. Take action today with confidence!

Start Your Trade-In